

122. A
S E R M O N

Occasioned by the DEATH of

Miss *JANE CROOKSHANK,*

A Pleasant and hopeful CHILD,

who died *June 20, 1745.*

Aged Three Years.

Preached at *Swallowstreet, St. James's Westminster,*
the 23d of the said Month.

By *WILL. CROOKSHANK, A.M.*

L O N D O N :

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1748.

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W. Musgrave



WILLIAM CROOKSHANK, A.M.

Printed by William Stahan

1743

A
P O E M

On the DEATH of the said CHILD.

By Mr. SM——T.

IF e'er mild Heav'n indulg'd parental Woe,
When wounded Nature felt th' afflicting
Blow;

SWEET BABE! thy Father unprov'd shall
mourn,

And thy fond Mother's Tears bedew thine Urn!

Fair was thy Morn, with every Blossom gay,
But short, alas! the promise of thy Day!
Unsparring Fate pronounced an early Doom,
And Death untimely nipt thine op'ning Bloom!

Thy Parents saw, with eager Joy possess'd,
Each Virtue dawn within thy tender Breast,
Thence too secure deriv'd a vain Presage
Of Bliss more perfect in thy riper Age:
But Heaven retracts the Blessing which it gave,
And all our Hopes lie wither'd in the Grave.

On the same Occasion, by the Reverend Mr. THOMAS GIBBONS, supposed to be spoken at the Grave.

THY fragrant Breast, O Grave, unfold,
And lightly lay thy softest mould;
We with this lovely Slumb'rer come,
And give her back into thy Womb.

Let Roses spread their blushing Bloom,
And Lillies flourish o'er the Tomb:
Roses and Lillies best can show
The Beauteous Charms that fade below.

Let no rude Hand disturb the Bed,
Where this repasing BABE is laid,
While little Cherubs sooth her Sleep,
And always watch, and always weep.

But think not, Earth, that we resign
This Dust, and call it ever thine;
Here shall it find a gentle Stay,
Till Heaven unfolds th' eternal Day.

Then shall this moulder'd Frame of Flesh
Be cloth'd with blooming Life afresh;
And thou, that swallow'st all, shalt be
Swallow'd, O Grave! in Victory,

2 Kings iv. 26.

*Run now, I pray thee, to meet her,
and say unto her, Is it well with
thee? Is it well with thy Hus-
band? Is it well with the Child?
And she answered, IT IS WELL.*

THOUGH divine Providence is often mysterious and amazing, there being frequently a *Wheel within a Wheel*; for God's *Way is in the Sea, and his Footsteps are not known**, yet infinite Wisdom can never err, nor infinite Goodness do us any wrong, it being an infallible Truth, that *all Things work together for Good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his Purpose*†. Surely then it is meet to be said unto God, *I have born Chastisement, I will not offend any more; that which I see not, teach thou me; if I have done Iniquity, I will do no more*‡.

God takes many ways to chastise his People, sometimes, by impairing their Health and blasting their Circumstances, at other

* Psalm lxxvii. 19.
xxxiv. 31.

† Rom. viii. 28.

‡ Job

times, by making a Breach in their Families, in removing their nearest and dearest Relations by the Stroke of Death.

Among these various Methods of Correction, it cannot but be very afflicting to a tender and affectionate Parent, to lose a Child ; because, though this is an Affliction that frequently happens to most Persons at some time or other in their Lives, yet several Circumstances do often concur, to render it grievous, and excite Compassion, as when it is the Child of our Youth, the Hopes of the Family, an ONLY or a lovely Child, endeared by all the little Tenderneſſes of Affection, and early Blossoms of Reason and Wisdom. *Indulgent* Parents are, on these and the like Accounts, apt to grieve, as they are to love to Excess, saying, “ The dear Image “ is ever before my Eyes, methinks I see “ its pretty Actions, and hear its lovely Voice. “ Wherever I go, I can never get the “ Thoughts of it out of my Mind. But “ O the Grief —— ! ” However, did the Parent, at such a time, only give way to serious and sedate Reflection, and could bring himself to a Persuasion, that *this is WELL* for him, and *WELL* for the Child, *that* would certainly tend to alleviate his Sorrow and ease the Bitterness of his Spirit, as seems to be hinted, in the Case of the *Shunamite*, in the Words of my Text.

We

We are told in the preceeding Part of this Chapter, how this *Sbunamite* entertained the Prophet *Elisha*, with a convenient Lodging, whenever he came to *Sbunem*. At one time, when he came there, he told her, that she should have a Son, which accordingly came to pass. But *when the Child was grown, he went out to his Father to the Reapers, and he said unto his Father, My Head, my Head* *. And O! whither should we go with our Complaints but to our heavenly Father? Thither the Spirit of Adoption brings all Believers with all their Griefs and Sorrows, enabling them to cry *Abba Father* †. The Father ordered the Child to be carried to his Mother, whose Bowels would doubtless be now moved, and maternal Sympathy and Concern overspread all her Soul; and as an Evidence of it, she never parted with him, till his Soul departed from him; for *he sat on her Knees till Noon, and then died* ‡. All his Mother's Care could not keep him alive, nor any of her earnest Wishes prevent the Stroke of Death: He was in Health in the Morning, and dead at Noon. Such is the Uncertainty of Creature-Comforts! But with admirable Prudence did this pious Mother keep her Tongue, as well as her Temper, under this surprizing and unexpected Affliction! Not one mur-

* Vers. 18, 19.

† Rom. viii. 20. ‡ Vers. 20.

muring,

muring, not one peevish, nor indecent, Expression was uttered by her ! but with a becoming Composure, *| she went up and laid him on the Bed of the Man of God, and shut the Door upon him, and went out **. Then she begged leave of her Husband, that she might go to *Elisha*. The Prophet seeing her at a Distance, said to his Servant *Gebazi*, *Behold yonder is that Shunamite : Run now, I pray thee, to meet her, and say unto her, Is it well with thee ? Is it well with thy Husband ? Is it well with the Child † ?* This plainly shews, that *Elishab* was under a great Concern for the Welfare of this Family, to whom he was under some special Obligations. When *Gebazi* delivered the Prophet's Message, she gave a short Answer, saying, *IT IS WELL*. This was an Answer, that discovered the Resignation of her Soul to the Will of Providence ; though her Child, her ONLY Child, the Child, in whom all her Hopes were placed, was now suddenly snatched from her, and lying dead in the House, yet she said, *IT IS WELL*. It is *well* with me, it is *well* with my Husband, and it is *well* even with the CHILD. But however trying the Dispensation was, she could not in Justice say otherwise, though, at the same time, *Her Soul was vexed within her ‡*. From this Passage of Scripture the following Observation is very obvious.

* Verse 21.

† Verse 25, 26.

‡ Verse 27.

“ That

“ That godly Parents, on the Death of
 “ a Child, an ONLY Child *, have rea-
 “ son to say *it is well.*” In discoursing on
 this Point I shall endeavour

I. To shew, when godly Parents may say
it is well, in such Circumstances as these.

II. In what Respects this *bereaving* Pro-
 vidence proves to be *well* both for the Pa-
 rents and the Child.

III. Make some Application of the whole.

I. I am to shew, when a godly Parent may
 say *it is well*, upon the Death of his only
 Child. Though there is no time when he
 may not say so, because all God's Ways are
 Judgment, yet there are some special Seasons,
 when he may and ought to make this Ac-
 knowledgment, as--- when he is with Sub-
 mission persuaded that this is the Lord's do-
 ing,--- when he is thereby brought to see
 the Insufficiency and Emptiness of all Crea-
 ture-Comforts, --- when he is come to a
 more immediate and constant Dependance
 on God,---when he submits to the Trial,
 which this makes of his Love to God and
 acquiescence in his Pleasure, ---when he is
 brought to see how dangerous 'it was to love
 a Creature too well,---- when Sin is remem-
 bered and thereby embittered to him, and

* This was an only Child.

B

----when

----when he is made to think more of the Grave and Eternity.

1. When he is, with Submission, persuaded, that this is the Lord's doing. *Be still and know that I am God* *. If our Fellow-Creature do any thing to displease us, we may not only enquire who did it, but also why he acted such a Part: but we are to beware of making such Enquiries in the present Case, we are rather to be silent and resigned, whatever it be that he does; for *Why dost thou strive against him? He giveth no Account of any of his Matters*. What therefore can be more reasonable than a resigned Subjection to him, who does all things well and all things wisely? It is said, that *whatsoever the King did, pleased all the People* †. And shall any thing the sovereign Disposer of all Things does be displeasing to us? Is it possible for him to do us any Injury? If we pluck a Rose in the Bud, as we walk in our own Garden, who can blame us for it? Is it not our own? and may we not crop it off when we please? We have here a parallel Case. The sweet Bud, which was cropt off before it was fully blown, was taken away by him who owned it, nay by him who formed it.

If then we are fully persuaded of this, we cannot but say IT IS WELL. We have several Instances of Believers recorded, who

* Psal. xli. 10.

† 2 Sam. iii. 36.

have,

have, from this Consideration, been brought to this submissive Temper and resigned Frame of Mind. This good old *Eli* said, upon a very mournful Occasion, *It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good* *. Thus likewise it was with *Job*, who upon receiving a Series of dismal Messages, said, *The Lord hath given, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the Name of the Lord* †. It ought therefore to be always remembered, that *He whose Name alone is JEHOVAH is the most High over all the Earth*; and that *he does according to his Will in the Armies of Heaven, and among the Inhabitants of the Earth*; and as he is a Being infinite in Wisdom, so there can be no ground of Challenge or Complaint, nor any Pretence of Injury or Wrong, in what is done by the wise and righteous Sovereign of the World, let it be ever so cross to our Inclinations, or ever so grievous to our Minds.

2. We shall say *IT IS WELL*, when we come to see the Insufficiency and Emptiness of our dearest Creature-Comforts. Children are certainly great Comforts, especially when they are agreeable and promising: But then they are but Creatures, *dying* Creatures, and when they are removed, their Dissolution tells us, 'twas a poor *dying* Comfort, a pretty Piece of *brittle Clay*, broken and dissolved, and mouldring to the Dust. It may be, our Love and our Grief join together to

* 1 Sam. iii. 18.

† Job i. 21.

recal the past Days of Fondness and Pleasure, short lived Pleasure! vain empty Fondness that ends in Tears and long Mourning! But why should it be so? Does not every such Providence as this shew us, and instruct us in the Vanity of that part of the Creature, of which we are most fond? It is surely an excellent Lesson, and an Instruction full of Usefulness: and have we in some Measure learned it? And ought we not to say, *IT IS WELL?*

Thus Death is made of Advantage to us, when it strikes us in so *tender* a Part, for it teaches us this sacred Lesson, how vain and empty are all our Hopes in the Creature! This is a Truth that stands written in many a Page of the Bible: but perhaps we would never have rightly learned it, had not Death copied it out for us in pale and fable Letters. The Dart of Death is like a Pen of Iron, with which he writes Emptiness and Vanity on every Friend, on every Relation that he takes from our Side, from our Family and from our Bosom. Let us then learn it, and say *IT IS WELL.*

3. We shall say so, when we are brought to a more immediate and constant Dependence on God. When the Stream is cut off, what should we do but run to the Fountain? When we enjoy the Pleasure of those dear Parts of ourselves, perhaps our Thoughts, and Hearts, and Affections are too much set upon them, and we place too much of our Hopes and Expectations

pectations in them, when they arrive at more advanced Years. Then we fondly imagine, that such and such a Child would prove an agreeable Comfort and the Staff of our old Age: But God, who is wiser than we, by removing them, dashes all our Hopes in pieces. If then, upon this trying Disappointment, we are enabled to apply to God himself, as our *chiefest Joy*, and heartily to renew our Choice of him, as our only all-sufficient Portion in Christ; if then the Spirit of Adoption is, in any measure, bestowed upon us, whereby we cry *Abba Father*; surely we may say, IT IS WELL.

Some on such an Occasion can speak this feelingly, and say, "Never did I live so much
 " upon my God, never was I admitted to
 " such Nearness and Intimacy with him,
 " nor had such Pleasure in pouring out my
 " Heart before him, as since the Day he
 " struck my earthly Comforts dead. Now
 " I can say, *My Father, thou art the Guide*
 " *of my Youth**." Though then a Christian may and ought, in such Circumstances, to mourn the Loss of such a *created* Mercy, yet he may, at the same time, silence all repining Thoughts, and say, IT IS WELL.

4. We may say this, when we submit to the Trial this makes of our Love to God, and Resignation to his unerring Pleasure;

* Jer. iii. 4.

for *Blessed is the Man that endureth Temptation, for when he is tried, he shall receive the Crown of Life, which the Lord hath promised to all that love him* *. When God sends his Messenger Death, and takes a dear and beloved Creature from our Arms, from our Bosom, the trying Question is like that of our Lord to *Peter, Simon, Son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than this* †? By such a Providence as this, God tries our Obedience to the first Command. *Thou shalt have no other Gods before me* ‡.

Our Love and Resignation to God, how cold, how imperfect at best! It is easy making a Profession, when *our Mountain stands strong*, and every thing looks clear and serene: but when a good and gracious God comes to call for those dear temporal Mercies, of which we are so fond, we then find it no easy Matter to part with them in a becoming Manner, and to keep Nature from rebelling against Principle. We are then too apt to forget what the Lord hath done for us, not only in the Course of his Providence, but also in the Methods of his Grace, especially how *he spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all* ||, and yet we think it hard to part with a Child, and are apt to grieve to Excess: but surely it should not be so. God

* Jam. i. 12. † John xxi. 15. ‡ Exod. xx. iii.
|| Rom. viii. 32.

then tries our Sincerity, whether we love him or not, love him with a superlative Love, whether we were sincere when we made a Dedication of our Child to him, specially in the Ordinance of Baptism. If then upon such trying Providence, we are enabled to say, " Lord, though it is thy Will to remove
 " the Desire of mine Eyes with a Stroke,
 " yet I will love thee, O Lord, my Strength,
 " and though it be with much Infirmary I
 " yield to thy Pleasure ; thou hast given,
 " and thou hast taken, blessed be the Name
 " of the Lord." Then we may say, IT IS WELL. There is nothing in all the History of *Abraham*, that gives him a more shining Character, than that of his giving up his Son *Isaac*, at God's Command ; when he took the Knife, the Wood, and the Fire in his Hand to offer him up for a Burnt-Offering. *Gen. xxii.*

5. Godly Parents may say, *It is well*, tho' they should lose an *only* Child, if they are thereby brought to see how dangerous it was to love the Creature too well ; for doubtless we may exceed in this, and we are guilty this way, when our Fondness is such, that all our Thoughts, and Care, and Concern center here. It has been already observed, that God is to be loved with a superlative Love, and therefore no Creature, let it be ever so near or dear unto us, should come in Competition with him. If then our Hearts
 bleed

bleed too long after the parting Stroke, and we mourn to excess for the Removal of such a near and dear Relation, it is a certain Evidence, that our Hearts were too much set upon it: But if, by the painful Providence, we are brought to a Sense of the Evil of this, we may then say, IT IS WELL; for the more we see the Folly of setting our Affections on any thing here below, the more will *our Conversation be in Heaven* *.

6. We may say IT IS WELL, if Sin be thereby remembered and imbittered. The Loss of a Child is certainly an Affliction, and we are to look upon it as such: but then one of the gracious Designs, for which God sends any Affliction on his People, is for imbittering Sin unto them. *By this shall the Iniquity of Jacob be purged, and this is all the Fruit to take away Sin*†; but can we hear the dying Moans of a tender Babe, and not be convinced of the Evil and Malignity of Sin? Can we so much as suppose that Infants would die, if it had not been for Sin? The Apostle *Paul* clearly accounts for the Reason of this, when he says, *By one Man Sin entered into the World, and Death by Sin; and so Death passed upon all Men, in whom all have sinned; and that Death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them, that had not sinned after the Similitude of Adam's Trans-*

* Phil. iii. 23.

† Isa. xxvii. 9.

gression, that is, who had not *actually* committed Sin in their *own Persons*, as *Adam* did, when he took and eat of the Forbidden-Fruit. When therefore God is pleased, by the Death of an *only Child*, or of any other dear and near Relative, to awake our drowsy Powers, to make us reflect, with Bitterness on our many Sins, and with Humiliation and Abasement to spread our Sins as well as our Sorrows before him, then we may say, IT IS WELL. God's People sometimes fall into such a Lethargy, that it is no easy Matter to awake them. Common Warnings will not do it. God therefore fetches a gracious Blow, and cuts down one of their dearest Creature-Comforts, and then they awake and stir themselves, saying, *Shew me wherefore thou contendest with me.* But once more on this Head.

7. We may say, IT IS WELL, when we are, by this, made to think more of the Grave and Eternity. When any of our Neighbours, or of our common Acquaintances die, we attend the Funeral, cast an Eye upon the Grave, and spend perhaps a Thought or two upon the open Sepulchre : But these Thoughts are like the Morning Cloud and early Dew, which soon passes away. But when he who bears the Keys of the invisible World, sends his pale Messenger into our Apartment, and thereby takes away a blooming Part of ourselves, and removes that tender Branch, to which

our Souls were too much glued ; this has a Tendency more effectually to awaken us from a drowsy Frame, and to fix our Thoughts on the important Concerns of Eternity. “ Part of
 “ me is gone to the Dust already ; it will
 “ not be long, till that which survives shall
 “ go also. Death has smitten the Desire of
 “ mine Eyes, it will not be long, till I
 “ shall feel the same Stroke. But am I pre-
 “ pared for it? Has *the Law of the Spirit*
 “ *of Life in Christ Jesus*, in any Measure,
 “ *made me free from the Law of Sin and*
 “ *Death* * ? Can I on good Grounds say, *I*
 “ *know whom I have believed* † ? Am I in
 “ Case to take Death in my Arms, and say,
 “ Welcome, O Friend.”

Now if such Thoughts as these have so abiding Impressions upon us, as that it is not in the Power of all the Trifles on Earth to banish them out of our Minds, and if they excite us, more than ever, to *forget the Things that are behind, and to reach those Things that are before, pressing towards the Mark for the Prize of the high Calling of God in Christ Jesus* ‡, then we may say, IT IS WELL. If moreover, we have ground to hope, that our dear deceased Relation is admitted among *the Spirits of the Just made perfect* ; and if this leads our Thoughts to

* Rom. viii. 2.
 12, 13.

† 2 Tim. i. 12.

‡ Phil. iii.

HEAVEN, rouse our Desires after the upper World, and make us pursue after those invisible Realities that are *within the Vail*, may not this give a Cheque to all the rising Thoughts of Murmur and Discontent? But alas! we are too fast tied to those earthly Tabernacles, too much attached to Flesh and Blood still, even though we find them such painful, and such sinful Companions: But 'tis certainly WELL, when we are brought, by such Providences, to live more at loose from the Earth, that we may be ready for the parting Hour. We should not then be angry with the Sovereign Hand of God, who breaks one Band after another; for tho' the Strokes be painful, yet they loosen our Spirits from this House of Clay, and teach us to *run with Patience the Race that is set before us* *. I proceed now

II. To enquire briefly, in what Respect it is *well* both with the Parent and the Child? And, 1. It is *well* with the Parent; for tho' he is deprived of his BABE, he is not deprived of his GOD. The Almighty still remains in the same endearing Relation to pious Parents; and this must needs be better to them than ten Children. The Psalmist could say, *When my Father and Mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up* †. In

* Heb. xii. 1. † Psal. xxvii. 10.

like manner may the true Believer say, tho' God remove my dearest earthly Comfort, yet he will not remove his Favour; *The Mercy of the Lord is from Everlasting to Everlasting upon them that fear him, and his Righteousness unto their Children's Children **. Again in such Circumstances they have the Covenant of Grace to comfort and support them, as was the Case of *David* in all his Family Afflictions, when, among his last Words, he could say, *Although my House be not so with God, yet he hath made with me an EVERLASTING COVENANT ordered in all Things and sure; for this is all my Salvation and all my Desire, although he make it not to grow*. If God don't see it proper to build up and encrease our Family, yet his Covenant stands fast for ever. In a word, it cannot but be well with the Parents, if they have Ground to reflect, that tho' their Children are dead to them, they are not so to God; tho' a painful Breach is made in their Families, yet an Addition is made to the heavenly Choir; though they are taken from the Earth, yet they are only removed hence to minister before the Throne of God and the Lamb. And therefore,

2. IT IS WELL with the *Child*. As for the Children of wicked and graceless Parents, the Scripture has revealed nothing concerning

* Psal. ciii. 17.

them,

them, and we are not to be wise above what is written: But we are assured concerning the Children of the Godly, that they are in Covenant with God. *The Promise is to you and your Children* *. It must needs then be *well* with them, when they die in their tender Years; for they are thereby freed from all the Calamities and Temptations of a wicked and ensnaring World; they are out of the reach of Snares: They have answered the Ends of their Creation, and the Purposes for which God sent them into the World. It would be *well*, could it be said of most who die in more advanced Years, that they had as truly answered the Ends of their Creation, as of those who die in their *Infant State*; for *out of the Mouth of Babes and Sucklings, God has ordained Strength* †. He is glorified by them. In a word, IT IS WELL with them; for they go to Heaven: Has not our Lord said, *Suffer little Children to come unto me, for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven*. If he would not have them kept from him here, he will not reject them hereafter; if they belong to the Kingdom of Grace, they shall not be excluded the Kingdom of Glory. It is therefore *well* with them, eternally well. I shall now conclude with the

* Acts ii. 39.

† Psal. viii. 2.

APPLICATION.

Though several proper Inferences might be deduced from what has been said, yet I rather chuse to apply this Subject by way of Exhortation. I. To Parents and Heads of Families. II. To those young Persons, who are capable of understanding what is spoken, and III. To all in general.

I. What has been said affords several useful Instructions to Parents and Heads of Families.

There are indeed several Heads of Families, who are not Parents, and it may be, some of those are very desirous to have their Families built up, which is certainly very desirable in itself: But then there is Danger in being too anxious in this respect. The Conduct of *Rachel* is recorded, in order to excite us to fix due Bounds of Moderation to our Desires in this Particular. She said to her Husband, *Give me Children, or else I die* *. God gave her two Sons, but she died of the Second. Be not therefore too anxious this way. Learn a meek and quiet Submission to the Will of Heaven; for, in your present Circumstances, you are freed from many a painful Care, many an aching Heart, which fond Parents know by mournful Ex-

* Gen. xxx. 1. xxxv. 18.

perience. Let it therefore be your principal Study, how to live in Love and in the Fear of God, *as being Heirs together of the Grace of Life* *.

But my chief Concern is with *Parents*. Has the Lord blessed you with Children? Are you favoured with these little Plants to fit around your Table? Give me leave then, who knows the Heart of a Parent, to exhort you to love your Children, but not with *excessive* Fondness, that it may be well both with you and them, and in a particular manner to love their Souls. Endeavour by times to instruct them in the Things of God, as their tender Minds begin to open. As soon as they begin to speak and lisp out their little Words, teach them that there is a God, a Redeemer and a Sanctifier, a Heaven and a Hell. Pray with them, plead for them, and learn them to pray, and let them know, that you don't inculcate upon them, what you don't put in practice yourselves; for I can assure you, from Experience, that some Children, before they are three Years of Age, are capable to observe you, nay, and to commend you too, when you perform your Duty in this respect.

You cannot instil good Principles into your Children too soon; because they die as well as others: And don't you think, that

* 1 Pet. iii. 7.

it would sit very uneasy upon your Conscience, to have a Child of three or four Years of Age taken from you, while you were never in the least at pains to instruct that dear Part of yourselves? But on the other hand, should it please God to bereave you of your Children, yet it would be no small Alleviation of your Grief to be able to say, " God is my
 " Witness, that I earnestly devoted this Child
 " to him, and knows how many Prayers I
 " put up on his behalf, and with what Im-
 " portunity I pleaded, that he might have
 " an Interest in his Favour, and be an early
 " Partaker of his Grace. He that knows
 " all Things, knows that I preferred this be-
 " fore all the Gold of the *Indies*, and endea-
 " voured, according to my Ability, to in-
 " struct him in the Things of God, accord-
 " ing to his Capacity, and that my greatest
 " Concern was for the eternal Welfare of
 " his precious Soul."

Need I use further Arguments to press you to suffer this Word of Exhortation? Have we not at this Day a sad Prospect of the rising Generation? And may not the criminal Negligence of Parents, be assigned as one of the principal Causes of it? Does not *Solomon* say, *Train up a Child in the Way that he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it* *? Now, can we think but

* Prov. xxii. 6.

Matters would have a much more agreeable Aspect, was this divine Direction more observed? This is the Way to have it well with you and with yours, both living and dying. I shall only add, that if you would wish to have your Instructions, Advices, and Reproofs crowned with Success, see that you imitate the royal Psalmist, in *behaving yourself wisely, and in walking within your House with a perfect Heart* *, that you may set a good Example before your Little-ones, who are generally more taken with what they see, than with what they hear. What God said to *Moses* concerning the *Israelites*, is very proper for enforcing this: *O that there were such an Heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my Commandments always, that it might be WELL WITH THEM, AND WITH THEIR CHILDREN FOR EVER* †. But,

II. I would briefly address such young ones, who are capable of understanding what is spoken. Consider, that you are as liable to the Stroke of Death as others. Are there not Graves making for young Persons of all Ages and Sexes? And what do you know, how soon the Pit of Corruption may be digged for you? None can tell what a Day may bring forth. Less than a Fortnight has made a great Alteration on some within these

* Psal. ci. 2.

† Deut. v. 29.

Walls: I would, therefore, out of the Fullness of my Heart, entreat you to *remember your Creator in the Days of your Youth* *; and, for this End to pay a due Regard to the good Counsel of your pious and affectionate Parents. If the Children of godly Parents, who warned, instructed, and reformed them, and endeavoured to train them up according to the Requirements of the Gospel, shall set at nought all this Counsel, and despise all this Reproof, it shall be ill with them; nay, it had been better for them they had never been born; for all the Pains that had been taken with them, shall aggravate their Condemnation, and heighten their Misery through Eternity. O! then let not this be your Case, but begin by times to seek the Lord. Does not Christ the eternal Wisdom of God say, *They that seek me early shall find me* †? And they that find Christ, *find Life, and shall obtain Favour of the Lord* ‡. Behold, now you are called, comply with the Call, and you shall have Reason to say, **IT IS WELL.** I shall now conclude

III. With a general Address to us all. Let us, my dear Friends, act such a Part, that when we are in Health, or in Sickness, while we live, or when we come to die, we may be in case to say, **IT IS WELL.** Suppose it should be said to any of you, this

* Eccl. xii. 1.

† Prov. viii. 17.

‡ Ver. 35.

Night, *thy Soul shall be required of thee* †. Are you all in case to say, IT IS WELL? Or rather, are there not many in this Congregation, whose Joints would tremble, and whose Souls would be filled with Terrors at the awful Message? And if so, O! why so thoughtless? why so indolent and secure? If there was no way to escape the Danger you are in of everlasting Ruin, you might then abandon yourselves to Despair: But as there is Hope in *Israel* concerning you, if you will only comply with the Invitations that are given you, to close with a whole Christ, and break off your Sins by Repentance; so your Indolence, Security, and Neglect are certainly most unexcusable; and will you persist in this Conduct still? Will you continue to neglect the great Salvation made known to you in the Word of God? Shall we call, and call in vain? Don't we seek your Welfare, and the Welfare of yours? Repent then and believe the Gospel. The Exhortation of *Paul* and *Silas* to the Jaylor is very remarkable: *Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, AND THY HOUSE* *; and your complying with it is the Way to be saved yourselves, and to bring Salvation to your House; and indeed it is the *only* Way, there being *no other Name given under Heaven, whereby Men can be saved, but the*

† Luke xii. 20.

* Acts xvi. 31.

Name of Jesus * ; and therefore if you are but enabled to accept of him, and rely upon him, as he is offered in the Gospel, then it shall be well with you, in all Circumstances of Life, at an Hour of Death, in the Day of Judgment, and through all the Ages of Eternity.

* Acts iv. 12.



F I N I S.

